

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HANOI 002060

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/BCLTV; INL/AAE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KCRM](#) [PREL](#) [PINS](#) [TW](#) [VM](#) [HUMANR](#) [ASEAN](#)

SUBJECT: SEXUAL ABUSE CASE OF VIETNAMESE WORKERS IN  
TAIWAN

1. (U) Summary: The GVN responded energetically to reports in the press of abuse of Vietnamese women who were sexually abused after traveling to Taiwan as overseas laborers. The GVN demanded investigation and follow-up by Taiwan authorities and ordered a review of all cases involving the offending labor recruiter in Taiwan. The case was widely covered in the Vietnamese media. End Summary.

#### CASE BACKGROUND

2. (U) According to the Ho Chi Minh City-based "Tuoi Tre" ("Youth") newspaper (owned by the Communist Youth League), a father, his son and a Vietnamese interpreter in Taiwan were arrested in July on charges of rape and sexual assault. Hung Ching-chang, the 70 year-old father, and Hung Minh-yu, the 48 year-old son and manager of an overseas labor recruitment agency in Taiwan, allegedly assaulted at least 20 Vietnamese women who were seeking work as maids, while claiming to conduct "physical examinations." When the case came to light, the accused forced the women to sign documents stating that they were not sexually harassed during their stay in Taiwan. In addition, each victim was paid USD 2,000 to remain silent about the case. Some of the victims contacted authorities anyway. If found guilty, the men could face up to ten years' imprisonment.

#### GVN'S RESPONSE

3. (U) The Government of Vietnam strongly (and publicly) "condemned the immoral acts perpetrated against Vietnamese guest workers in Taiwan," according to Deputy Minister of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs Nguyen Luong Trao. Vietnam asked the Taiwan authorities to conduct a prompt investigation of the case, to bring the offenders to trial and to provide timely and precise information to the Vietnamese side, the Deputy Minister said. Trao asked Taiwan to exercise measures to protect the rights and interests of the victims in terms of employment and income. These workers should be given satisfactory compensation for their suffering and helped to return to Vietnam if they wish, Trao told Taipei officials during a working session with the Hanoi-based Taipei Cultural and Economic Office. The GVN also insisted that Taiwan "create favorable conditions" for the Taipei-based Vietnam Cultural and Economic Office to provide consultancy services to the victims.

4. (U) Vietnam's labor export agencies will stop working with some Taiwanese brokers, said an official from the Ministry of Labor, War Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA). Nguyen Ngoc Quynh, Deputy Director of the Department for Guest Workers Management, announced the policy recently after a delegation of the Department's trade union finished a working session with responsible agencies in Taiwan on the sexual abuse case at Zhongyou Recruitment Company. According to Quynh, his agency has asked Vietnamese businesses and labor export agencies to review the operations of Taiwanese partner brokers and stop any partnerships with those agencies that are found to have failed to protect the Vietnamese guest workers' legitimate rights.

#### TAIWAN'S RESPONSE

5. (U) In response to the public statements and private meetings, Taipei representatives told Deputy Minister Trao that Taiwan considers the case a serious one, and that Taiwan police are conducting an intensive investigation in order to bring the offenders to justice quickly. Taiwan labor agencies are carrying out measures to protect the rights of Vietnamese guest workers in Taiwan, they said. They promised publicly to inform Vietnamese officials of the results of the investigation and how the case is handled. Quynh acknowledged the Taiwanese authorities' "cooperative attitude and firm measures" in resolving the case. The Taiwan authorities are collecting evidence to bring suspects to justice and protect the legitimate rights of the victims, said

sources from MOLISA.

16. (U) "We shall apply severe punishment toward bad brokers" Luu Vi Nhan, Head of Taiwan's Overseas Labor Board, said in a public statement. According to Nhan, Taiwanese authorities must terminate operations by Zhongyou and other "bad brokers." Concerning this particular case, authorities in Taiwan will review all companies who used Zhongyou's services to find out about other possible abuse cases.

17. (U) COMMENT: The substantial media coverage given to this case initially caused us to worry that other abuse cases were occurring in Taiwan or elsewhere that we were not hearing or reading about. However, consultations with MOLISA officials and journalists have satisfied us that there have not been similar cases in the last year. Most of the problems that Vietnam's labor export industry has confronted recently, especially in Taiwan, Japan and Korea, have involved Vietnamese workers who break their contracts and disappear into the illegal labor markets. Combating this problem, which the GVN fears will cause Vietnamese laborers to be less popular in export markets, requires the GVN to undertake unpopular enforcement actions against its own citizens. Consequently, MOLISA and the GVN seized on the opportunity this case presented to demonstrate that they are as enthusiastic about protecting Vietnamese workers as they are about protecting the prerogatives of the labor-consuming countries and businesses.

MARINE